

## 10. The Future

This study has shown that several stadiums have had a rather problematic sporting legacy since they hosted a major international sporting event. But even though there are cases to learn from, more half-empty stadiums are still likely to be built in the future.

2012 is a big year for sport and a big year for sport means that new major stadiums have been built. The major sporting events in 2012 are primarily the UEFA Euro in Poland and Ukraine and the Summer Olympics in London, UK. How will the future look for the new stadiums built to host these major events?

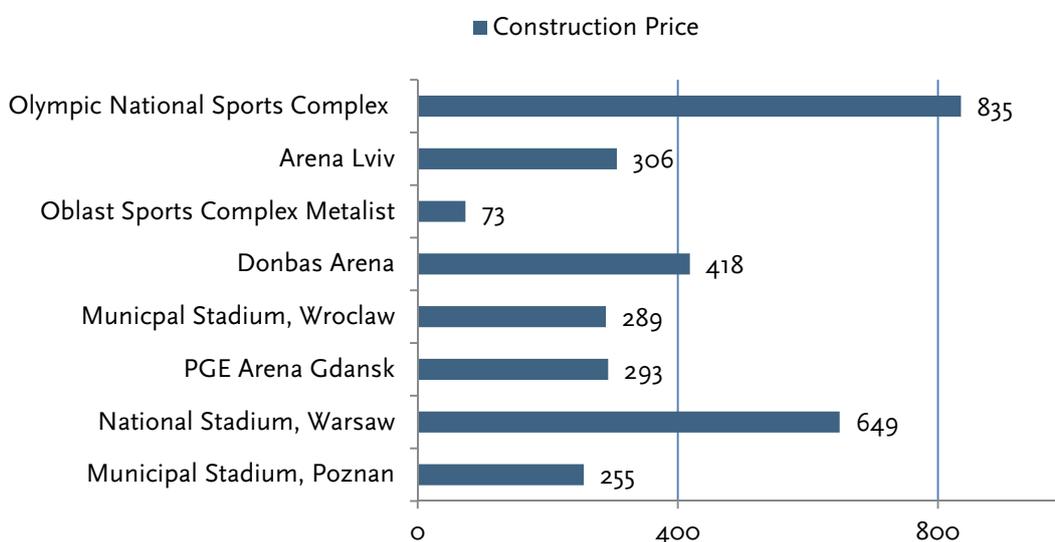
### UEFA Euro 2012 in Poland/Ukraine

For this summer's UEFA Euro in Poland and Ukraine, eight stadiums will be used – four stadiums in each country. Two stadiums in Ukraine were completed in 2009 while the majority of the remaining stadiums were completed in 2011.

In addition to Oblast Sports Complex Metalist in Kharkiv and Donbas Arena in Donetsk, both in Ukraine, the other six stadiums that will be used for the event are publicly owned.

The total cost of the eight stadiums is about \$3 bn., making the venues for UEFA Euro 2012 three times more expensive than the stadiums built for UEFA Euro 2004 in Portugal.

Figure 10.1: Construction prices for UEFA Euro 2012 stadiums (million dollars)



In addition to the eight stadiums, four other stadiums have been built in Poland and Ukraine largely because of the event: Dnipro Stadium, Dnipropetrovsk, and Chornomorets Stadium, Odessa, in Ukraine and Silesian Stadium (Stadion Śląski) and Stadion Miejski im Henryka Reymana, Krakow, in Poland were all promised in the initial application from Poland and Ukraine as reserve stadiums and have cost about \$500 million to construct.

As Figure 10.1 above shows, the Olympic National Sports Complex (NSC Olimpiysky) in Kiev, Ukraine, was the most expensive stadium to build and the stadium is, along with the new national stadium in Poland, National Stadium, Warsaw (Stadion Narodowy w Warszawie), the stadium with the most uncertain future.

Although the Olympic National Sports Complex has had an anchor tenant in FC Dynamo Kyiv since December 2011, the new tenant needs to improve its attendance if the stadium is going to have good weekly attendance figures and not be dependent on other events. In 2010/11 FC Dynamo Kyiv had 256,721 spectators in total and if we calculate these figures against the capacity of Olympic National Sports Complex the stadium only has an index of 3.7. At the time of writing FC Dynamo Kyiv had played four games in the league at the stadium with an average attendance of 47,526.<sup>158</sup>

Problems concerning the sporting legacy of UEFA Euro 2012 may also occur with the new national stadium in Warsaw. The stadium can only hope the Polish national football team will be a regular tenant because the two major teams in Warsaw, Legia Warszawa and Polonia Warszawa have smaller and more suitable stadiums as their home grounds. The maintenance cost for the stadium is estimated to cost \$10 million a year, and it will be necessary for the stadium to host several more events in addition to the national team's games to be financial sustainable.

For the two privately funded stadiums, Donbas Arena and Sports Complex Oblast Metalist, the future looks a bit brighter. Both stadiums have anchor tenants that had fairly good attendance figures last season, and the potential World Stadium Indexes of 16.2 and 14.3 are comparable to a majority of the German World Cup stadiums.

The fourth stadium in Ukraine, Lviv Arena, has FC Karpaty Lviv as its anchor tenant. The team does not have the same attendance figures as Donbas Arena and Sports Complex Oblast Metalist's tenants, so Lviv Arena's World Stadium Index is under 10 – which is insufficient.

When the two clubs Slask Wroclaw and Lechia Gdansk moved into their new home grounds for the 2011/12 season after Municipal Stadium, Wroclaw (Stadion Miejski we Wrocławiu) and PGE Arena Gdansk were completed, both of the clubs significantly increased their attendance figures in comparison to the season before. The significant increase is, however, not enough to for the stadium to score over 10 on the index scale. If one includes the two teams' current attendance averages for 2011/12 season and assumes these numbers will be constant, Municipal Stadium, Wroclaw will have a World Stadium Index of 5.9, while PGE Arena Gdansk will have an index of 6.7.

Municipal Stadium, Poznan (Stadion Miejski Poznan) opened in 2010 and during its first year 458,735 attended events held at the stadium. The stadium in Poznan seems to be the UEFA Euro 2012 venue with the brightest future in Poland. Its index of 10.7 is solid without being impressive.

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<sup>158</sup> [http://www.worldfootball.net/alle\\_spiele/ukr-premyer-liga-2011-2012/](http://www.worldfootball.net/alle_spiele/ukr-premyer-liga-2011-2012/)

The average attendance figure of the teams playing at the three venues in Gdansk, Poznan and Wroclaw is 15,991,<sup>159</sup> while the average capacity of the three venues is 42,793. The figures indicate a potential sporting legacy problem, which reflects that the stadiums in Poland are too big in comparison to the actual need. A significant increase in attendance figures is necessary if a negative legacy is to be avoided.

Apart from the opening game and the host countries' games, games in the group stage only require stadiums with a net capacity of 30,000 – but all of the UEFA Euro stadiums in Poland have a net capacity of over 40,000. In addition to the national stadium in Warsaw, which has a net capacity of 58,000, just one more 40,000 seat stadium would have been enough to meet UEFA's requirements. Poland would still have been able to host quarter- and semi-finals, and the two other stadiums would have been more suitable to host domestic games and meet the actual local need after the event.

## 2012 Summer Olympics

### London Olympic Stadium

The London Olympic Stadium has cost £486 million to construct,<sup>160</sup> equivalent to more than \$780 million, making it the most expensive stadium included in this report. The stadium has a capacity of 80,000 and the price per seat is thus \$9,750.

Wembley Stadium, opened in 2007, could have been an option for the London's main Olympic stadium as it has the capability to host athletics with only a minor reconstruction, but the stadium is just going to be used for Great Britain's group matches and the finals in the football tournament.

It still remains unclear who is going to be the Olympic Stadium's tenant after the Olympics.<sup>161</sup> In January 2011, no agreement with a prospective tenant had been signed<sup>162</sup> and, as London was awarded 2017 IAAF World Athletic Championships, the running track will remain in the stadium. This aspect makes it quite problematic for one of the possible tenants, West Ham United FC, to move into the stadium as the club prefers a pure football ground.

If West Ham becomes the anchor tenant its plan is to reduce the capacity to 60,000, but although this is a reduction of 20,000 seats, it is still likely that the stadium will be too big in relation to the team's average attendance. West Ham United FC play in the Championship (1<sup>st</sup> division) 2011/12 and currently have an average attendance of just over 30,000.<sup>163</sup> Compared to a majority of the anchor tenants using the stadiums included in this report, the figures of West Ham United FC are very good, but if they are going to move into a stadium with a 60,000 capacity they have to improve their figures dramatically to avoid having a half empty stadium.

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<sup>159</sup> <http://www.worldfootball.net/zuschauer/pol-ekstraklasa-2011-2012/1/>

<sup>160</sup> [http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport2/hi/olympics/london\\_2012/15149865.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport2/hi/olympics/london_2012/15149865.stm)

<sup>161</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/olympics/8875423/London-2012-Olympics-World-Athletics-Championship-bid-given-boost-with-news-of-athletics-99-year-lease-in-the-stadium.html>

<sup>162</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/olympics/9021454/West-Ham-concerned-about-new-rental-terms-for-Olympic-Stadium.html>

<sup>163</sup> <http://www.worldfootball.net/zuschauer/eng-championship-2011-2012/1/>

Both Live Nation and Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG) have shown interest in becoming the operator of the London Olympic Stadium,<sup>164</sup> and it would probably be preferable with one of the two major actors running the stadium to secure a certain number of high profile events beyond football.

The legacy of the stadium has been controversial. Will the athletic tracks be removed or kept? Who will be the anchor tenant? Influential people contributed to a London application to host 2017 IAAF World Athletic Championships in order to secure the stadium as an athletic venue. But while awarding London the 2017 event has made some people pleased, athletics is not a big spectator sport on a daily basis and most of the athletics events that will take place in the stadium up to 2017 will not attract large crowds. The tracks make the stadium also less attractive to potential anchor tenants.

The Olympic Stadium in Athens, which still has its athletics tracks, has a relatively high index thanks to two of Greece's most popular football clubs playing in the stadium. In Atlanta and Sydney, it was decided to remove the track and adapt the Olympic stadiums to fill present local sporting needs, which has proven to be successful, especially in Atlanta. If not for sport politics, London could look beyond athletics and instead think about what could make the stadium successful, both from a short and long term perspective.

It had been quite easy for London to look at Manchester and Etihad Stadium for advice on how to have a successful sporting legacy in the U.K. – no tracks and a pure football ground. However, such a strategy probably would have left London without the right to host the Olympics.

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<sup>164</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/olympics/9021454/West-Ham-concerned-about-new-rental-terms-for-Olympic-Stadium.html>